

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LILONGWE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 3481

EXDIS

FROM LOW

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS/ PINT, PDEV, RH
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: GRAHAM-LOW CONVERSATIONS WITH BRAND
FOURIE IN PRETORIA

1. SUMMARY: FOURIE WAS UNRECEPTIVE TO OUR ARGUMENT THAT
A CONFERENCE WAS NEEDED SOON. HE SEEMED MORE IMPRESSED BY
THE POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES WHICH AGREEING TO ATTEND A
CONFERENCE WOULD CREATE FOR THE INTERNAL NATIONALISTS AND
CONFINED HIS OFFER OF SUPPORT TO URGING THE INTERNAL
NATIONALISTS TO BRING NKOMO BACK. HE SUGGESTED THAT
PERHAPS AFTER AN ELECTION HAD BEEN HELD AND GOVERNMENT
INSTALLED, THERE MIGHT BE A BETTER CHANCE TO GE THE PARTIES
TOGETHER. END SUMMARY.

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2. GRAHAM AND I, TOGETHER WITH BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER
SIR DAVID SCOTT, SAW BRAND FOURIE FOR ABOUT AN HOUR
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21. GRAHAM LED OFF THE CONVERSATION BY
NOTING FOURIE'S STATEMENTS DURING THE APRIL 16 MEETING
WITH SECRETARIES VANCE AND OWEN AND MINISTER BOTHA THAT
THE NEXT SEVEN OR EIGHT WEEKS WOULD TELL WHETHER THE
INTERNAL SETTLEMENT WOULD WORK. THEN A CONFERENCE MIGHT

BE APPROPRIATE EITHER BECAUSE OF THE INTERNAL GROUP'S STRENGTH OF WEAKNESS. MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE ARE STILL RESISTING A CONFERENCE BECAUSE THEY FEAR THAT IT MIGHT CAUSE THEIR FOLLOWERS TO QUESTION THEIR COMMITMENT TO THE MARCH 3 AGREEMENT. GRAHAM NOTED THAT THE SALISBURY GROUP WOULD BE PREPARED TO ATTEND PRIVATE WORKING-LEVEL MEETINGS. MUGABE MIGHT ACCEPT THAT IF THERE WAS AGREEMENT FIRST ON A CONFERENCE.

3. FOURIE DESCRIBED THEIR CONTACTS WITH SITHOLE AND MUZOREWA. (HE SAID THEY HAD CONTACT WITH EVERYONE BUT CHIRAU, WHO NEVER REQUESTED IT AND WHOM THEY CONSIDER "CLOSE TO SMITH.") HE INDICATED THAT THE INTERNAL NATIONALISTS FELT ENCOURAGED THAT THE TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT WAS WORKING. THEY ARE DETERMINED TO FOLLOW THROUGH ON IT AND HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY ENCOURAGED FIRST BY SMITH'S ANNOUNCEMENT THAT HE WOULD WITHDRAW AFTER DECEMBER 31 AND, SECONDLY, BY THE AGREEMENT ON A SATISFACTORY ELECTION PROCEDURE. FOURIE SAID HEY BELIEVE PROGRESS IS BEING MADE ON THE CEASEFIRE. HE THEN ASKED WHETHER WE HAD CONSIDERED WHETHER IT MIGHT NOT BE POSSIBLE TO BRING THE PARTIES TOGETHER ONCE A GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN FORMED ON THE BASIS OF THE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT NEXT JANUARY.

4. I REPLIED THAT IT WAS OUR GENERAL EXPERIENCE THAT ONCE POWER HAS BEEN ACHIEVED IT IS MORE DIFFICULT TO
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COMPROMISE AND SHARE IT THAN BEFORE. I NOTED KHAMA'S STATEMENT TO US THE PREVIOUS DAY THAT NONE OF THE THREE INTERNAL NATIONALISTS COULD HOLD THE COUNTRY TOGETHER. I DESCRIBED OUR IMPRESSION THAT THE CEASEFIRE EVEN IF SUCCESSFUL WOULD LEAD TO AN INCREASE IN VIOLENCE DURING THE NEXT FEW MONTHS; NOTED RECENT DEFECTIONS FROM MUZOREWA TO MUGABE AND SPOKE OF DETECTABLE HARDENING FROM BOTH SIDES OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. IT WAS IMPORTANT, THEREFORE, THAT WE MOVE TO A CONFERENCE WHILE THE SITUATION IS STILL FLUID BEFORE THE PARTIES POSITIONS HARDEN FURTHER. THE INTERNAL NATIONALISTS NEEDED INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION WHICH MIGHT BE ENCOURAGED BY THEIR ADOPTING POSITION OF REASONABLENESS TOWARDS THE PATRIOTIC FRONT.

5. FOURIE REPLIED BY REPEATING GRAHAM'S POINT THAT THE INTERNAL NATIONALISTS WOULD SUFFER POLITICALLY BY AGREEING TO A CONFERENCE. TO DO SO WOULD SHAKE THE FAITH OF GUERRILLAS WHO MIGHT CONSIDER SWITCHING SIDES. HE SAID DEFECTIONS PROBABLY WENT BOTH WAYS BUT AGREED THAT THE HOVE AFFAIR HAD DAMAGED THE SUPPORT THE MARCH 3 AGREEMENT WAS GETTING. GRAHAM DESCRIBED THE "FIFTH PRINCIPLE" NOTING THAT THERE WOULD BE A STRONG CASE FOR RECOGNIZING

THE RESULTS OF A SATISFACTORY ELECTION. FOURIE REPLIED THAT IT WAS DIFFICULT TO GET MORE THAN 55 PERCENT OF THE VOTE IN RHODESIA WITH LITERACY AT SUCH A LOW LEVEL. HE NOTED THAT RHODESIANS SEEMED TO BE DOING WELL IN THE ECONOMIC AREA, SELLING THEIR TOBACCO AND MAIZE. HE UNDERLINED, HOWEVER, THAT THESE SALES WERE NOT UNDER SOUTH AFRICAN CERTIFICATES.

6. FOURIE SAID HE TOUGHT IAN SMITH WAS TAKING A DETACHED VIEW OF THE SITUATION AND WOULD BE UNLIKELY TO TRY TO INFLUENCE IT GREATLY. EVERYONE--KAUNDA AND THE OTHER FRONT--LINE PRESIDENTS--HAD SAID IT WAS IMPORTANT TO GET RID OF SMITH. NOW THAT WAS BEING DONE. HAROLD HAWKINS HAD SAID SMITH FEELS HE HAS DONE HIS JOB AND IT IS NOW OUT
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OF HIS HANDS. FOURIE DID NOT THINK THAT THE WHITE REFERENDUM WOULD PRESENT ANY PROBLEMS TO SMITH. TO GRAHAM'S COMMENT THAT GAYLARD WAS PROBABLY RESISTING CHANGE, FOURIE AGREED HE MAY HAVE BEEN SLOWER IN COMING AROUND THAN THE OTHERS BUT HAS COME A LONG WAY.

7. GRAHAM ASKED THAT SOUTH AFRICA USE ITS INFLUENCE TO ENCOURAGE AGREEMENT ON A CONFERENCE BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE. FOURIE REPLIED THAT THEY HAD BEEN SUGGESTING TO THE INTERNAL NATIONALISTS THE ADVANTAGES OF BRINGING NKOMO BACK. I SAID I THOUGHT THAT PROBABLY WOULD HAVE TO BE THROUGH A CONFERENCE SINCE NKOMO WOULD FIND IT VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE AT THIS POINT TO JOIN THE MARCH 3 AGREEMENT. FOURIE ENDED THE CONVERSATION NOTING THAT NKOMO'S SOLDIERS HAD NOT YET PROVED THEMSELVES, AS HAD THE ZANU FIGHTERS WHO HAD DEVELOPED AN EFFECTIVE STYLE. IF NKOMO SHOULD DECIDE TO ATTACK RHODESIA IN A CONVENTIONAL STYLE, HE WOULD PROBABLY BE BADLY DEFEATED AND MIGHT FIND HIMSELF OUT IN A FEW DAYS.

7. FOURIE SUGGESTED THAT WE RETURN TO PRETORIA NEXT WEEK "FOR LUNCH" WITH HIM.
EDMONDSON

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